

The University of Chicago

THE "LIBER DE DIVERSIS MEDICINIS"
IN THE THORNTON MANUSCRIPT
(MS LINCOLN CATHEDRAL A. 5. 2)

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE
FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

1935

By

MARGARET SINCLAIR OGDEN

Private Edition, Distributed by
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NOTE

The following essential portion of the thesis contains certain foot-
notes on pages 13 to 27 inclusive which refer to the complete thesis, which
is to be found only in the University of Chicago Libraries.



INTRODUCTION

The Manuscript and the Scribe

The Thornton manuscript (MS Lincoln Cathedral A.5.2) is a paper volume of 314 leaves, measuring 11.5 by 8.5 inches. It is written in a cursive hand, which is carelessly formed and which exhibits considerable variation.¹ The final folios contain a collection of medical prescriptions and charms. Beginning at folio 280r with the heading Hic incipit liber de diversis medicinis, the collection breaks off with the manuscript at folio 314v. There are, in addition, seven small fragments of later pages containing medical material.² Besides the medical text, the manuscript contains various romances, sermons, mystical writings, and religious lyrics.³

On several of the folios there are notations, apparently in the hand of the scribe, which indicate that the scribe was named Robert Thornton. One of the most explicit of the notations is the following which occurs on folio 213r: R Thornton dictus qui scripsit sit benedictus Amen.⁴

¹New Palaeographical Society, Facsimiles of ancient manuscripts, Series II, (London, 1913-14), plate 45.

²These seven fragments vary in size from small marginal scraps which contain nothing or only three or four letters up to marginal strips the length of the page and two inches wide at the broadest point. Being next to the binding, even the largest strips are mostly blank margins. Four marginal headings have been preserved in this way. See below, p. 10, n. 5 and p. 11, n. 4. Of the text itself, in only a few cases are there as many as fifteen letters of a line preserved. Many of the lines contain only the initial or final letter or a fragment of one. Upon careful examination of the roto-graphs of these fragments, it was decided that they contributed too few complete words to be worth reproducing in this edition.

³The contents of this manuscript are described in detail in The Thornton romances, ed. J. O. Halliwell (Camden Society; London, 1844), pp. xxv-xxvi.

⁴The notations which may be in the hand of the scribe are: folio 53r, at the bottom of the page: Espoyez

Thornton

ygl En espyrance may;
folio 93v, in a scroll upon which an eagle is standing, the eagle and scroll being in the margin beside a capital K: Robart Thornton; folio 98v, at the end of the Morte Arthure, possibly not in the hand of the scribe: Here endes Morte Arthure writen by Robert of Thornton, and on the next line:

The names of other members of the Thornton family, Wylliam, Edward, Ellinor, and Dorythy Thornton, are scribbled in the margins of the manuscript in later hands.¹ At the top of folio 49v, which also contains the words Wylliam Thornton his Boke in a similar hand, there occurs the following note concerning the birth of a Robert Thornton, obviously not the scribe of the manuscript: Isto die natus fuit Robertus Thornton in Ridayll' anno Domini Mccccliij.² The names of a few other persons have been scribbled in the margins: Jhon Rokeby, Robert louson, and Roger blande.³

Another manuscript, British Museum Additional 31042, is generally believed to have been written by the same scribe. The hands of the two manuscripts are very similar, although the hand of the Additional manuscript varies even more than that of the Lincoln manuscript. At the end of the Northern Passion there occurs the name R. Thornton partially erased and

R Thornton dictus qui Scripsit Sit benedictus Amen; folio 129v, at the end of the Life of St. Christopher; Explicit vita sancti christofori Th[the rest of the word has been erased]; folio 211v, at the end of a Poetical address to Christ; Explicit Tractatus Explicit Amen' Thornton' Amen'; folio 213r, at the end of a meditation on the Cross; R Thornton' dictus qui scripsit sit benedictus Amen'; folio 278v, at the top of the page; Thornton' Misereatur mei dei.

In the Alexander, within a capital A, there is a picture of a barrel drawn on its side with a tree springing from it (The prose life of Alexander, ed. J. S. Westlake [Early English Text Society, Original Series, No. 143; London, 1913], p. 60). Miss Everett in "Some notes on the identity of Robert Thornton", an unpublished term paper presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements of English 342, University of Chicago, 1935, suggests that this may be a rebus on the Thornton name. She cites an instance of a similar rebus: William Page, The Victoria history of the county of York, North Riding (London, 1914), I, 256. She also suggests that a dragon over the letter T in the Alexander (The prose... Alexander, ed. Westlake, p. 90) may be a reference to the Thornton family crest (Cf. A. C. Fox-Davies, Armorial families [Edinburgh, 1895], p. 90).

¹The name Edward Thornton appears on folios 75v, 137r and 194r; Ellinor Thornton on folio 135v; and Dorythy Thornton on folios 265r and 266r.

²Folio 49v is blank except for the following scribbles which seem to be in the same hand: sanota maria ante domini nostri Ihesu christi
 "Isto die natus ffuit, Robertus Thornton in Ridayll'
 anno domini Mccccliij / Isto die natus ffuit Robertus / Isto die natus ffuit
 Roobar / a a a In ye nam of owr lorde / b b b In domino confido quomo /
 c o o o In domino confido / d d d d / e e / f ff / g g g g / h h / i i /
 k k / L ll L / M Nen m m / N N N / O o o o / Wylliam thornton his Boke."
 The name Wylliam Thornton appears on folio 144v.

³On a margin of folio 220v the following appears: "Oft craving
 makkes some forgittinge Ihon Rokeby." The name Robert louson appears on folio
 29r, Roger blande on folio 265r.

disfigured. The Siege of Jerusalem ends with the colophon: Explicit la sege de Ierusalem. R. Thornton [written over and changed to another surname] dictus qui scripsit sit benedictus. Amen. In a mid-sixteenth century hand there is scribbled in the margin of folio 49 John Nettletons boke and four times in the margin of folio 139v Nettleton.¹ These notations suggest that the Additional MS passed out of the hands of the family early, probably before the middle of the sixteenth century. Nothing else is known of the history of the manuscript before the nineteenth century.² On the other hand, the Lincoln MS may have remained in the family considerably longer.³ Some of the Thornton names are written in hands of the late sixteenth century, and there is no positive record that the manuscript was at Lincoln Cathedral before the nineteenth century.⁴

Both the manuscripts are written in a characteristically mid-fifteenth century hand. The inclusion of several poems by Lydgate (d. 1449) in the Additional MS suggests that it was probably not written until the second quarter, and perhaps not until after the middle of the fifteenth

¹MS British Museum Additional 31042 is a paper manuscript consisting of 179 leaves, bound in two vellum leaves from a Latin breviary of the fifteenth century. It is described in: The quaterfoil of love, ed. I. Gollancz (Early English Text Society, No. 195; London, 1935), pp. vii-viii. The sege of Melayne, ed. Sidney Herrtage (Early English Text Society, Extra Series, No. XXXIV, Part 2; London, 1879) p. viii; and Karl Brunner, "Hs Brit. Mus. Additional 31042," Archiv, CXXXII (1914), 316-27. Miss Everett takes the following statement in a seventeenth century hand on the fly leaf of a copy of the Pricke of conscience to indicate that the scribe may have written a third manuscript containing all of the Pricke of conscience: "Ye booke is complete tis wrote in the stile and maner of (Occ)leve Chaucer's scholar tho in my Coppy tis said to be 'Mr. Thorntone one of the grooms of the Princes Chamber' which I understand of Hen. 5" (H. E. Allen, Writings ascribed to Richard Rolle [New York and London, 1927], pp. 383-83). It should not be overlooked that the Lincoln MS contains ll. 438-551 of the Pricke of conscience on folios 276v and following (Halliwell, The Thornton romances, p. xxxv). In the court records, Miss Everett has found a John Thornton and a Thomas Thornton in the reigns of Edward III and Richard II (R.E. Kirk, Life records of Chaucer, Part IV [Chaucer Society Publications, No. 47; London, 1900], pp. 173, 179, and Sir Thomas Hardy, Syllabus of Rymer's Foedera [London, 1873], II, 482). She has been unable to find record of any Thorntons at the court of Henry V.

²The Additional MS was sent from America to Mr. J. Pearson for sale in 1879 in which year it was purchased by the British Museum (The sege of Melayne, ed. Herrtage, p. viii).

³See below, p. 5, n. 1.

⁴In spite of Woolley's surmise that the manuscript came to Lincoln Cathedral between 1511 and 1527, there is no record of it in the catalogues

century.¹ The Lincoln MS seems to have been written some time after 1422, the date assigned to a holy woman's visions of purgatory in one of the prose pieces,² and before 1453-4, the date given in the note recording the birth of Robert Thornton at Ryedale.³ This dating is confirmed by the water marks on the paper of the manuscript. Documentary material dated as early as 1413 and as late as 1461 has been found bearing the same water marks as those in the paper of which the Lincoln MS is composed.⁴

Certain facts point to the localization of the Lincoln manuscript in the North Riding of Yorkshire. Ryedale, mentioned as the birthplace of the later Robert Thornton, is the name of a wapentake in the southeastern part of the North Riding. A number of the medical prescriptions begin or end with the phrase: Secundum Rectorem de Oswaldkirk.⁵ Oswaldkirk is a parish in the wapentake of Ryedale. This positive evidence for the localization of the manuscript in Yorkshire stands out the more prominently because of the lack of any record of the presence of the manuscript in the Lincoln Cathedral library before the nineteenth century.⁶

If the manuscript is to be localized in Yorkshire, the most likely Thorntons to be connected with the manuscript are the Thorntons of East Newton in the wapentake of Ryedale. In the late seventeenth century, the family seems to have recognized some connection with the manuscript. On the

before the nineteenth century. Cf. Reginald Woolley, Catalogue of the manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library (London, 1927), pp. v-xx, 51-61.

¹Poems in the Additional MS probably by Lydgate are: No. 8, Passionis Christi; No. 9 Memorial verses on the kings of England; No. 10 Dietary; Nos. 14, 15, and 16 The virtues of the mass (Archiv, CXXXII [1914], 317-18).

²Cf. Yorkshire writers, ed. Carl Horstman (New York, 1895), I, 385-86: "Lystenys and heris howe a womane was trauelde in hir slepe with a speryte of purgatorye, and how þat scho made hir compleynte to hir gastely fadir and said on this wyse: Fadir, I do go to wiete how grete trybulacyone I had in my slepe appone saynt Lowrence day at nyghte, þe gere ofoure lordes a thowsande fowre hundrethe twenty and two."

³See above, p. 2, n. 2, where this is quoted.

⁴New Palaeographical Society, Facsimiles, Series II, plate 45.

⁵See below, p. 10, n. 6.

⁶See above, p. 3, n. 4.

fly leaf of a genealogy of the Thorntons of East Newton which he compiled, Thomas Comber, Dean of Durham (d. 1699), mentions a note concerning the family on a leaf of the Thornton manuscript. Although he makes no statement as to the location of our manuscript, his note implies that he had access to it and that he regarded the Thorntons mentioned in it as belonging to his family.¹ In Jackson's edition of the Autobiography of Mrs. Alice Thornton, the mother-in-law of Dean Comber, there is a pedigree of the family of Thornton of East Newton based on the pedigree of Dean Comber, verified, and, in some points, corrected by the pedigrees of the family in the "York visitations" of 1563, 1584, 1612, and 1665 and various other documents.²

According to this pedigree, Robert Thornton who became lord of East Newton on the death of his father in 1418 was probably the scribe of the Lincoln manuscript. It is probably this Robert Thornton who is recorded twice in 1428 as holding lands with others in the wapentake of Ryedale³ and is named in 1441 as one of the executors of the will of a Ricardus Pikeryng de Oswaldkirk miles.⁴ Jackson's pedigree states that the scribe's son William was living at Thirkleby in 1456, apparently not yet having

¹The autobiography of Mrs. Alice Thornton of East Newton, ed. Charles Jackson (Surtees Society Publications, No. 62; London, 1875), p. viii. It is possible that the book passed out of the hands of the family in 1692 when East Newton and its furnishings were sold (Victoria history, Yorkshire North Riding, I, 562-63).

²This pedigree appears on an unnumbered sheet at the end of the volume.

³Inquisitions and assessments relating to feudal aids, 1284-1431 (London, 1920), VI, 814, 816. Miss Everett, *op. cit.* has also found references in Yorkshire documents from 1391-1414 to Robert Thornton, including one in 1398 to Robert de Thornton of Neuton (Calendar of the Patent Rolls 1396-99 [London, 1909], p. 365). As the pedigree states that both the scribe's father (d. 1418) and his grandfather (d. 1402) were named Robert Thornton, it seems probable that these references are to earlier members of the family.

⁴Cf. Testamenta eboracensia, ed. James Raine (Surtees Society Publications, No. 30; Durham, 1854), II, 82: [Will dated September 1, 1441] "Ego Ricardus Pikeryng, de Oswaldkirk, miles - sep. in ecclesia parochiali de Oswaldkirk, ante altare Beatae Mariae in australi parte in eadem ecclesia..... Roberto Thornton meam nigram togam furratam cum foynes. Residuum margaretae uxori meae, quam facio executorem et sibi Robertum Thornton et Ed mundum Pikeringe."

succeeded to East Newton by the death of his father. By 1465 Robert Thornton must have been dead as his wife Isabel is recorded in the pedigree as having been married in that year to a John Mekylfeld. Both the location and the date of this Robert Thornton seem to fit the location and date which we have already selected as most probable for the composition of the manuscripts.

The identification is to some extent confirmed by the fact that the other Thornton names in the manuscript might have belonged to persons directly descended from the scribe. William Thornton, whose name appears on folios 49v and 144v, may have been the son of the scribe.¹ Robert Thornton whose birth in 1453-4 is recorded on folio 49v probably was the grandson of the scribe.² The name William Thornton and the note regarding Robert Thornton on folio 49v seem to be in the same hand. It is possible, then, that William Thornton, the son of the scribe, wrote his name at the bottom of the blank page at the top of which he had announced the birth of his son Robert. The family pedigree states that this William Thornton was living at Thirkleby in 1456 and that his will, dated 1487, was proved in 1489. Perhaps, however, the name refers to William Thornton, the great grandson of the scribe, who died in 1545.³

Edward Thornton appears on folios 75v, 137r, and 194r. The only Edward Thornton in the family pedigree is a younger son of William Thornton, the great grandson of the scribe. Edward is recorded in the pedigree as still living in 1586, the year of the death of his wife Margery.

Ellinor Thornton is written on folio 135v. According to the pedigree, the wife of William Thornton, the grandson of William Thornton great grandson of the scribe, was an Eleanor, eldest daughter of Thomas Grimston of Grimston Garth. She was married before 1571 and still living

¹"Pedigree of the family of Thornton of East Newton," Autobiography Mrs. Alice Thornton, unnumbered final sheet.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

in 1575.¹

The name Dorythy Thornton is written on folios 265r and 266r in a decidedly late hand. The most likely person to whom this name may refer is Dorothy, daughter of Thomas Metham and wife of Robert Thornton, the eldest son of the Eleanor Thornton mentioned above. This Dorothy Thornton was buried at Stonegrave in 1619.² It is possible, however, that the signature refers not to the wife of this Robert Thornton but to his sister Dorothy, who was married to William Askwith in 1591.³ While Robert, William, Edward, Eleanor, and Dorothy are among the commonest English names, it is perhaps significant that among the Lincolnshire Thorntons of this period Miss Everett has been able to find Robert and William Thorntons, but no Edward, Eleanor, or Dorothy Thornton.⁴

The names of persons not belonging to the Thornton family which appear in the margins of these manuscripts are more difficult to identify. However, a few of these names suggest connection with Yorkshire. Miss Everett has found that there were families living near East Newton in the sixteenth century named Rokeby, Lowson, and Blande.⁵

In the medical text, individual prescriptions are attributed to three persons, Magistrum William de Excestre,⁶ the Rector of Oswaldkirk,⁷

¹Ibid.

²Ibid. On July 8, 1607, Dorothea, wife of Robert Thornton, of Stanegrave, was under charge for recusancy. Cf. Quarter Sessions records, ed. John Atkinson (The North Riding Record Society; London, 1884), p. 79.

³William Brown, "On the heraldry at Thirsk," Yorkshire archaeological journal, XXII (1912-13), 215: "William [Askwith] married, in 1590-1, Dorothy daughter of William Thornton of East Newton, in Ryedale, and Eleanor, daughter of Thomas Grimston, of Grimston."

⁴A. R. Maddison, Lincolnshire pedigrees (Harleian Society, No. 52; London, 1904), p. 974; William Thornton of Grantham (1627); p. 975; Robert Thornton of Roughton (will dated 1612); p. 975; William Thornton of Willoughby (1625).

⁵A John Rokebie is recorded in 1577-78 in the Feet of fines of the Tudor period, Part II, Yorkshire archaeological and topographical association, Record Series, V (1888), 109, 114. A Robert Lowson is named in 1575 (Ibid. 67). Various members of a Blande family living near East Newton are mentioned in the same volume (pp. 22, 23, 60, 109, 128, and 144).

⁶See below, p. 11, n. 2.

⁷See below, p. 10, n. 6.

and ser Apilton.¹ No information concerning William de Excestre has been found. The Rector of Oswaldkirk was thought by Halliwell to be the Ricardus Pikiaryng who in 1441 named Robert Thornton an executor of his will. Miss Everett has pointed out that Halliwell is wrong in identifying this person who is styled miles in his will as the Rector of Oswaldkirk.² William Appleton, a Minorite friar, is recorded as having been a physician in the employ of John of Gaunt who paid him an annual stipend from 1373 until the friar's death in 1381.³ While it is not likely that Thornton was old enough at the time of his death to have known him personally, it is possible that Thornton is quoting a recipe traditionally attributed to him. Pickering, one of the castles of John of Gaunt, was only about fifteen miles from East Newton.⁴ The one recipe attributed to ser Apilton lists rare unguents that a physician to royalty would have been most likely to have prescribed.⁵

Everything that we know about Robert Thornton of East Newton agrees with what we know about the manuscripts more closely than what we know of any other Robert Thornton in the fifteenth century. If Robert Thornton of East Newton did not write the manuscripts, the most probable person becomes Robert Thornton, archdeacon of Bedford (d. 1450). Perry's undocumented statement that Robert Thornton, archdeacon of Bedford, was born either at East Newton or at Oswaldkirk seems to be without foundation.⁶ As nothing

¹See below, p. 11, n. 1.

²See above, p. 5, n. 4.

³John of Gaunt's register, ed. Sydney Armitage-Smith (Camden Society, 3d Series, Vol. 20; London, 1911), p. 335; Sydney Armitage-Smith, John of Gaunt (London, 1904), p. 248 note. In considering this identification, it should not be overlooked that the name may refer to some person connected with the parish or manor of Appleton in Ryedale (now Appleton-le-Street) which were east of Oswaldkirk and East Newton in the wapentake of Ryedale. Cf. Victoria history, Yorkshire North Riding, I, 451.

⁴Armitage-Smith, John of Gaunt, p. 218; Victoria history, Yorkshire North Riding, I, supplementary maps V and VI.

⁵See the note to folio 299r/16.

⁶English prose treatises of Richard Rolle, ed. George Perry (Early English Text Society, Original Series, No. 20; London, 1866), p. vi.

is known of the archdeacon's family, no connection with the manuscript can be established in that way.¹ No positive evidence has been found connecting the Lincoln cathedral manuscript with Lincolnshire before modern times, nor has any Lincolnshire family of Thorntons been found bearing the given names written in the margins of the Lincoln manuscript.²

Moreover, the manuscripts themselves are in some respects more like the product of a gentleman amateur than of a cleric, licentiate in both laws.³ The ornamentation and the hand of the manuscripts appear to be the work of an amateur.⁴ The Latin is far more corrupt than the Latin in the samples of the archdeacon's official reports which have been preserved.⁵ Although the manuscripts contain many religious pieces, their contents are by no means predominantly religious. Two-thirds of the folios of the Lincoln manuscript and half of the folios of the Additional manuscript contain secular material, chiefly romances.⁶ Both from the closer agreement of the facts of localization, and the general character of the manuscripts themselves, the identification of the scribe as Robert Thornton of East Newton seems to be the most likely one which has so far been presented.

¹Miss Everett who has made a careful study of the archdeacon's life has been unable to find any information about his family.

²See above, p. 3 , n. 4 and p. 7 , n. 4 .

³Miss Everett has pointed out several instances when the archdeacon served on legal commissions in London, e.g. the following in which he is referred to as licentiate in both laws: Calendar of the Patent Rolls, 1436-41 (Publications of the Public Record Office of Great Britain; London, 1911), p. 28.

⁴New Palaeographical Society, Facsimiles Series II, plate 45; Karl Brunner, Die mittelenglische Versroman über Richard Löwenherz (Vienna, 1913), pp. 4-5.

⁵Samples of the archdeacon's Latin writings are to be found in: Visitations of religious houses in the diocese of Lincoln ed. A. Hamilton Thompson (Horncastle, 1914), I, 82-86.

⁶The Lincoln MS has 198 folios of secular material, 116 of religious. The Additional MS has 90 folios of religious and 86 of secular material.

The Medical Background of the Text

The Liber de diversis medicinis is a compendium of remedies for various ailments. The remedies are arranged according to the part of the body affected, proceeding roughly from head to foot. They are for the most part in the form of recipes or prescriptions, varying in length from a single line to more than half a page. The simplest prescribe a specific medicine, especially part of an herb or an animal, for a given disease. The most complex list the ingredients and give directions for the preparation of elaborate medicaments, compound unguents, potions, and the like. Occasionally fairly long passages appear which are not in the regular form of a prescription or recipe. Among these are a list of the signs of death,¹ a set of somewhat garbled directions for a simple sort of surgical treatment in the case of head wounds,² and a three page discussion of the symptoms and treatment of the pestilence.³ Scattered through the English material there are a number of Latin recipes and charms, including three lines of verse and a long Latin passage giving directions for the mass of exorcism in the treatment of epilepsy.⁴ Apparently, from the marginal headings preserved in the fragments of leaves after folio 314, the treatise originally continued with recipes arranged according to their chief herbal ingredient.⁵

Thornton gives certain of his receipts upon the authority of others. A score of his English and one of his Latin recipes are ascribed to the Rector of Oswaldkirk.⁶ One recipe is attributed to

¹Folio 304v/5-16

²Folios 309r/20 - 309v/22

³Folios 300v/32 - 302r/20

⁴Folios 281v/11; 282r/6-7; 285v/26-32; 287v/7-19; 288r/15-16; 291r/22-24, 34-35; 292r/12; 293v/34-35; 294r/26-27; 294v/5-6; 295r/24; 297r/21-25; 297v/16-21, 27-28; 298r/32-34; 300v/24; 301r/5-6; 303v/8-14, 20, 23-29, 30, 35; 304r/2; 306v/3-10. The three very interesting lines of Latin verse: 284v/29-31, Latin mass of exorcism 296r/14, 16-296v/34.

⁵The names of the herbs, Dok, Betoyn' id sunt,
Vetoyn'

Haryue, and Pympernelle appear in the margins of the fragmentary pages. See above p.1 n 2.

⁶Folios 288r/35-288v/2; 289r/33-34; 291r/34-35; 291v/4-7, 27;

Sir Apilton¹ and another to Master William of Excestre.² Two others are supported upon the authority of the famous Greek Ypocras.³ The names of both Ypocras and Plinius also appear in the fragmentary leaves at the end of the manuscript.⁴

Many similar medical works have survived from the middle ages, some in Latin, some in French, and some, especially from the fifteenth century, in English.⁵ They are composed of much the same kind of recipes as the Thornton Liber de diversis medicinis. Recipes in these other collections are occasionally attributed to one or another of the great medical authorities of antiquity, especially Hippocrates, Pliny, and Galen.⁶ Their indebtedness to antiquity is by no means limited to a score of recipes. In fact, the fifteenth century collections like Thornton's are to a considerable extent composed of ancient materials transmitted to them through a long line of similar compilations, each composed of whatever material had seemed best to its eclectic and often uncritical compiler. Certain unifying elements gave to these heterogeneous compilations a homogeneity which grew as the tradition advanced.

One of the most important unifying elements in the tradition was the general acceptance of the medical theory which Galen set forth in his works. Founding his system upon the Hippocratic theory of the humours and upon the idea of treatment by opposites, Galen classified diseases according to the

292r/21-22; 292v/9, 19-20; 294v/15-28; 295r/6-9, 23-24; 295v/13-15, 24-25; 298r/13-15, 27, 34-298v/14; 299r/19-24; 312r/21-23.

¹Folio 299r/14-18.

²Folio 282v/22-24.

³Folios 284v/24-28; 303v/4-6.

⁴On the fragment of folio 316r, there appears: dronk..../ Plinius..../ & dryn..../; on folio 320r: and kepid elene with..../ als sais Maister Ypocra..../ pat coueres be fallande..../.

⁵Dorothea Singer, "A survey of medical MSS in the British Isles dating from before the sixteenth century," Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine, XII (1919), 96-107.

⁶See, for example: A leechbook, ed. Warren Dawson (London, 1934), Nos. 485, 496, and 1064.

particular humour or humours which he believed to be deficient. The materials which could be used to affect the body he divided into three classes: first, those which operated directly through the elementary qualities of hot, cold, moist, and dry, corresponding to the humours in the body; second, those which in addition had secondary attributes, such as sourness, bitterness, sharpness, and so forth; and finally those which had besides these two some further quality, such as a purgative effect. Maintaining that these qualities were present in substances in varying degrees of intensity, he marked off four such degrees; in the first, the quality was barely perceptible; in the second, its effect was apparent; in the third, the effect was drastic; and in the fourth, complete and destructive.¹ From these general principles he elaborated a complicated system of cures. This he presented by quoting a large number of recipes from his contemporaries and predecessors, praising those which were in accord with his system, criticizing those which were contrary to it, and adding successful remedies of his own.

The system was variously interpreted by Galen's followers, but the fundamental body of principles remained in general much as Galen conceived it and became one of the most powerful influences upon medieval medicine. In the fifteenth century recipe literature these principles are tacitly assumed rather than consciously expounded. It is only in the treatise on the pestilence, which we shall see was of entirely separate origin, that we find explicit discussion of the humours.² In the recipes themselves we find here and there a reference to the dry cough,³ to palsy as one of the cold passions,⁴ to hot and cold dropsy.⁵ Occasionally the quality or, more

¹"Ton Apton Pharmakon," Claudii Galeni opera omnia, ed. Carolus G. Kuhn (Leipzig, 1826), XI.

²Folios 300v/32-302r/20. See below, p. 18.

³Folio 288v/14m, 15m. Cf. Galen's opera omnia, ed. Kuhn, XIII, 63, 64 and, for the moist cough, ibid., 68.

⁴Folio 307v/18. Cf. Galen's opera omnia, ed. Kuhn, XV, 369.

⁵Folios 293r/5; 293v/15m. Galen mentions dropsy as a cold disease (Galen's opera omnia, ed. Kuhn, VII, 609), as dry (ibid., XVII, 669), and as cold and moist (ibid., I, 522).

rarely, the degree of an herb is mentioned.¹ The long list of hot gums, spices, roots, herbs, and seeds appearing in a recipe for the palsy is unparalleled in English recipe literature.² Yet the general principles of the Galenic system are often implied in the kind of remedy prescribed. It is obvious that cold remedies are prescribed for hot diseases and vice versa,³ that ingredients are prescribed for their secondary as well as their primary qualities,⁴ and that the degree of ingredients is implied more often than it is stated.⁵ The whole body of recipe literature is shot through with evidence of this theory, which the compilers consciously or unconsciously took for granted.

The medical tradition behind the Thornton recipes was further unified by the large body of recipes which had persisted in an unbroken succession of compilations from antiquity. This body of material contained much that originated before the time of Galen. The traditional arrangement and presentation of material in the recipes seems to be as old as Egyptian medicine.⁶ Some preparations and prognostic recipes owe their origin to the medical works of Hippocrates (d. B.C. 377), though it is clear that many of them have been considerably modified in becoming part of the recipe tradition.⁷ An occasional recipe in the Liber is paralleled in the works of

¹Folio 280v/25.

²Folios 307v/18-308r/7. Systematic lists of the qualities and degrees of materia medica are common enough in the more sophisticated medical works of the middle ages, e.g., "Des degres des médicaments," La grande chirurgie de Guy de Chauliac, ed. E. Nicaise (Paris, 1890), pp. 628-58.

³See Table I, in the notes to folios 307v/18-308r/7.

⁴For example, the recommendation of vinegar as an alternate for cold water (folio 299v/31) implies that its dual properties of coldness and sourness had been assumed.

⁵For example, the recommendation of hot water and luke warm ale as alternates (folio 288v/14) implies that ale is considered hotter than water.

⁶See A leechbook, ed. Dawson, p. 15 and Warren Dawson, Magician and leech (London, 1929), pp. 110, 133, 141-147.

⁷See the notes to folios 303v/4-7; 304v/7-17; 306r/28-37.

Aristotle (d. B. C. 322),¹ Celsus (d. A.D. 50),² Scribonius Largus (d. 47),³ and Dioscorides (d. 90).⁴ The works of Pliny (d. 79) contain an unusually large number of simple prescriptions which are paralleled in the Thornton collection.⁵ The bulk of the Egyptian, Greek, and Roman material was gathered together in the works of Galen (d. 200). While Galen's medical theory dominated the whole medieval medical tradition, there are but few recipes in Thornton's collection which represent Galen's recipes unmodified by later tradition.⁶

Starting from the nucleus of material afforded them by the collections of Galen and his predecessors, a number of influential writers of the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries made similar compilations of recipes. These men tended to be more eclectic and less critically selective than Galen had been. Some augmented their collections with simple remedies composed of common ingredients, while others added elaborate recipes containing rare and exotic drugs. Many included magical cures of various kinds. Besides adding new recipes to their collections, they often combined and modified many of the original recipes. On the whole, they did much to establish the conventional features of medieval recipe compilations. Among the best known of the post-Galenic compilers are: Oribasios Pergamenes (d. 403), Apuleius Barbarus (fl. 400), Sextus Placitus (fl. 370), Marcellus Empiricus (fl. 425), Alexander of Tralles (d. 605), and Paul of Aegina (d. 690). Their compilations all include recipes which are paralleled in the

¹See the notes to folios 292r/14-15, 293r/29-32.

²See the notes to folios 284r/39-40.

³See the notes to folios 285v/8-13; 287r/11-17, 18-19.

⁴See the notes to folios 285v/8-13; 291r/24, 34-38; 292r/13-14; 292r/35-36, etc.

⁵See the notes to folios 280r/10-12; 280v/3-4, 30-31; 281r/18-21; 282r/5, 6-7, 16-18; 282v/11-17, 18, 19, 20-21; 282v/33-34, etc.

⁶See the notes to folios 280r/10-12; 280v/5-6, 30-31; 281v/11-12; 282r/5, 6-7, 23-24, etc.

Thornton collection.¹

The early medieval compilers who followed the post-Galenic writers inherited the medical tradition of antiquity, either directly or through the medium of their post-Galenic predecessors. They continued the process of addition and modification. A significant development was the gradual Christianization of the pagan charms and magical cures. Such works as the London Antidotarium, the Anglo-Saxon Leechbooks, the Cambridge and Glasgow Antidotaria, and the medical section of the encyclopedia in MS 17 St. John's College, Oxford probably represent the early medieval recipe tradition before the advent of Arabian influence. The Thornton collection has parallels with recipes in all of these works except the London Antidotarium.²

With the translation of the medical works of the Arabians into Latin, a new and important source of recipes was made available. Starting from a Hippocratic and Galenic origin, the Arabian medical tradition had progressed independently of the western European. Partly because of the Mohammedan prohibitions against drunkenness, a large number of recipes to prevent and overcome intoxication appear in the Arabian medical works, and seem to have come into medieval recipe collections through Arabian influence. The Arabians were also very active in the use of materia medica of Eastern origin and in the preparation of elaborate syrups, cyrcyns, and electuaries. Among the Arabian medical writings, of which the Latin translations contain parallels to the recipes in the Thornton Liber, are the works of Mesue the

¹For parallels to recipes in the works of Oribasios, see the notes to folios 286v/35-37; 314r/7-11; Apuleius Barbarus, the notes to folios 289r/9; 290v/18, 19-28; 291r/1-2; 292r/13-14, 32-33, etc.; Sextus Placitus, the notes to folios 284v/23-24; 285v/32; 287r/36-37; 289r/22; 291v/18-19, etc. Marcellus Empiricus, the notes to folios 280r/13-15; 282v/11-17; 283r/25; 287r/11-17; 293r/24-25, etc.; Alexander of Tralles, the notes to folios 282r/5, 23-24; 282v/11-17, 20-21; 283r/6-7, 19-21, etc.; Paul of Aegina, the notes to folios 280v/25-26; 281r/31-32; 281v/22-24; 282r/23-24; 282v/20-21, etc.

²For parallels in the Anglo-Saxon Leechbooks, see the notes to folios 280r/18-19; 282r/16-18; 282v/11-17, 18, 20-21; 283r/6-7, etc.; the Cambridge Antidotarium, the notes to folios 280r/10-12, 20-22, 25-26; 282v/11-17, 33-34; 283r/1; 285v/14-16, etc.; the Glasgow Antidotarium, the notes to folios 282r/16-18; 282v/20-21; 285v/32, etc.; MS 17 St. John's College Oxford, the notes to folios 283r/19-21, 25; 284r/31-33; 292v/6; 297v/35; 304v/2-4, 7-17.

elder (d. 857),¹ Rhazes (d. 923),² Haly Abbas (d. 994),³ Avicenna (d. 1037),⁴ Averroes (d. 1198),⁵ and Najm ad-din Mahmud (13th cent.).⁶

The Arabian influence was introduced into Europe by a group of writers who practiced and taught their art at Salerno. Combining the European and Arabian medical theories, they continued the development of the recipe tradition. Although the Salernitans showed themselves progressive thinkers in the fields of anatomy and surgery, their attitude toward the recipe tradition was thoroughly conservative. The recipes in the Antidotarium of Nicolaus, for example, exhibit the tendency of the Salernitans to multiply the number of the ingredients and complicate their mixture, but not to change the kind of ingredients, nor the theory of the proposed cures. There are parallels in the Thornton collection to recipes in the works of Constantinus Africanus (d. 1087),⁷ and other Salernitans.⁸ Several of the preparations in the Antidotarium of Nicolaus (ca. 1140) are mentioned in the Liber.⁹ Echoes of the Regimen sanitatis Salernitanum are also to be found.

The medical writings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries contribute little that is new to the recipe tradition. The writings of

¹See the notes to folios 291v/34-38; 307r/26-27.

²See the notes to folios 282r/6-7; 282v/33-34; 295r/26, 26-27, 28, 30-31; 299r/17; 307r/26-27.

³See the notes to folios 283r/19-21; 284r/39-40; 291v/10-13; 292v/38; 297r/22; 305v/29-32.

⁴See the notes to folios 280v/25-26; 282r/6-7, 23-24, 27-30; 283r/25; 283v/12; 284r/16-25, 34-38, 39-40; 284v/24-28, 32-33; 285v/8-13; 286v/33-34, 35-37; 287r/6, 36-37; 291r/22-24, 24, 28-29; 291v/18-19, 34-38; 292v/8, 29-32; 293v/9; 295r/27, 28, 30-31; 297r/22; 299v/34-35; 303v/1-4, 17-19; 304v/1-17; 309v/9, 11; 313v/9.

⁵See the notes to folios 284v/24-28; 304v/7-17.

⁶See the notes to folios 282r/23-24; 284v/24-28, 32-33; 299r/17; 305r/29-32; 305v/29-32.

⁷See the notes to folios 282r/6-7; 283r/6-7; 284r/39-40; 284v/24-28; 285v/32, etc.

⁸See the notes to folios 280r/6-9; 280v/3-4; 281r/18-21; 282v/31-32; 283r/6-7, 8-14, 29-30, 31, etc.

⁹See the notes to folios 298r/24, 27; 299r/14-18; 305r/29-32; 305v/26, 28, 41; 306r/28-37; 313v/9.

John of Gaddesden (d. 1361) and Bernard de Gordon (fl. 1300) contain comparatively few new recipes and no important new types of recipes. This is also true of the writings of the great surgeons of this period, Lanfranc (fl. 1315), Henri de Mondeville (d. 1320), Guy of Chauliac (d. 1368), and John of Arderne (d. 1380). There are a few parallels to Thornton recipes in the works of each of these men.¹

In addition to the works of famous men, there were in these centuries and the fifteenth a large number of anonymous compilations. In the thirteenth century, numerous anonymous Anglo-French collections of recipes were made. Parallels in the Liber have been found to a number of the recipes in the material included in Paul Meyer's descriptions of unedited Anglo-French manuscripts.² Whether in French, in Latin, or in English, these works were almost entirely collections of recipes which had already been in existence for a long time. We may look upon the anonymous collections from the thirteenth century onwards as representing the beginning of the decadence of the recipe tradition. Older recipes are frequently garbled, run together, and fragmentarily recorded, while no genuinely new recipes appear.

The immediate channels through which the recipes of this long tradition reached the Thornton compilation are difficult or impossible to determine. Obviously with a continuous tradition of compilation, the mere existence of parallels does not imply direct source relationship. It is unlikely that the works of most of his great predecessors were available to Thornton directly, and the fact that there are recipes in the Thornton

¹For parallels in the works of Albertus Magnus see the notes to folios 282v/1-4; 303v/1-4; John of Gaddesden, the notes to folios 287v/7-19; 293v/34-35; 294r/23; 296r/16-296v/34; 297r/22; 303v/16-17, 17-19, 32-33; 304r/3-6; Bernard de Gordon, the notes to folios 295r/28; 296r/16-296v/34; 297r/16-19, 13-16, 22; Lanfranc, the notes to folios 282r/23-24; 313v/9; Henri de Mondeville, the notes to folio 299r/14-18; Guy of Chauliac, the notes to folios 293v/9; 299r/14-18; 307v/35; 308v/21-309r/16; John of Arderne, the notes to folios 291v/14-15, 28-33; 299r/14-18; 299v/31, 32-33, 36-37; 300v/10-11; 303v/20-22; 311v/39-40; 312v/1-2.

²See the notes to folios 280r/10-12; 281r/12-17; 285v/33-36; 286r/4-5; 290v/36-37; 295v/27-29; 299v/27-28; 304v/5-7, 30-31, 33-305r/3; 308r/21; 310r/4-6, 6-7; 314v/5-8.

collection parallel to recipes in all the major works of the recipe tradition does not indicate that Thornton had access to any of the more famous recipe collections. The echoes of the Regimen, found in a couplet and a single line, well may have reached the compiler by tradition. The couplet is altered by the addition of a new and otherwise unknown line, and the single line occurs in a charm.¹ Thus, even here, the evidence points rather to transmission through oral or learned channels than to direct knowledge of the Regimen. A few Latin recipes which reproduce recipes from known medical works verbatim, may possibly have been obtained directly, although they probably were obtained through the medium of other compilations.²

One small fourteenth century work is incorporated as a whole into the compilation. It is the smaller of the two treatises on the pestilence commonly attributed to John of Burgundy.³ Thornton introduces it and concludes it without mention of the authorship. However, it is clear that he is translating the Latin treatise or giving a transcript of one of the many English translations. A comparison of Thornton's text with that of the one Latin manuscript which has been edited shows that it follows the Latin original closely.⁴ It is certainly not a transcript of either of the two manuscripts of English translations which have been edited.⁵

As the Liber includes a number of Latin recipes, we may infer that Thornton was probably acquainted with some collection which was all or partly

¹See the notes to folios 284v/29-31 and 297r/15-16.

²The recipe on folio 282r/6-7 appears in the works of Rhazes, see note; for parallels to other Latin recipes see the notes to folios 295r/24; 296r/16-296v/34; 300v/24.

³300v/32 -302r/20. Cf. David Murray, John de Burdens or John de Burgundia....and the pestilence, (London, 1891) and Karl Sudhoff, "Pestschriften aus den ersten 150 Jahren nach der epidemie des 'Schwarzen Todes' 1348; 27 and 28 Die Pestschriften des Johann von Burgund und Johann von Bordeaux," Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin, V (1912), 58-75.

⁴British Museum, Royal MSS, 13 E. X, folio 24v; D. Murray, John de Burdens, pp. 24-29.

⁵Register of the Abbey of Kelso; Ibid., pp. 30-33 and British Museum, Sloane MSS, 2320, folios 13v-16; K. Sudhoff, "Pestschriften," Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin, V (1912), 73-75.

in Latin. This work was probably a contemporary one, more like that of Ketham (fl. 1480) from the late fifteenth century than like the Latin Antidotaria from the early middle ages.¹ It is also likely that Thornton was familiar with one or more contemporary English recipe collections. The parallels from all edited Old and Middle English medical works and from a few others accessible in rotograph throw some light on the nature of Thornton's indebtedness to this kind of material.²

The parallels range from those which have a few prominent ingredients or some striking procedure in common, to those in which the details of wording are identical.³ Sometimes one version is more specific in its designations and directions than another.⁴ Sometimes the subject matter is alike but the expression widely different.⁵ Some recipes are so short that the similarities are not of great significance, while others are so long that the cumulation of similarities makes a common original certain.⁶ Among the recipes which are closely parallel in wording, the differences are sometimes chiefly dialectal in character.⁷ Some recipes represent more corrupt versions of the original recipe than others.⁸ In other cases all versions are obviously garbled, and the correct reading is difficult or impossible to

¹Parallels to Latin recipes from well known works are given in the notes to folios 282r/6-7; 295r/24; 296r/16 - 296v/34 and 300v/24. Parallels to recipes in the works of Ketham are given in the notes to folios 291r/32-33; 298r/20-23; 303r/26-32; 303v/31-32; 308v/21-309r/16; 313v/9.

²References to all close Middle English parallels are given in the notes to the text and, where necessary, accompanied by explanatory discussions.

³See page 20 n. 4 and notes to folio 280v/10-12.

⁴See the notes to folios 282v/11-17; 283v/30-34; and 284v/5-11.

⁵See the note to folio 282v/31-32.

⁶For parallels of very simple recipes, see the notes to folios 280r/1-2; 281r/1; and 285v/33-34; of fairly long recipes, the notes to folios 283r/32-283v/2; 283v/30-34; 298r/28-29.

⁷See the notes to folios 283r/32-283v/2; 287r/11-17; 292v/29-32; and 306v/19-23, 29-32.

⁸See the notes to folios 283r/32-283v/2; 290v/32-33; 298r/20-23; and 304r/18-20.

determine.¹ Sometimes a single recipe in one collection appears as two separate but adjacent recipes in another collection.² Probably the most common kind of parallel is that in which the subject matter and the pattern of expression are substantially identical with the occasional omission, addition, or substitution of a single, unimportant ingredient and with slight variations in wording.³

The closest verbatim parallels to the Thornton recipes occur in the short selection of fourteenth century recipes edited in Reliquiae Antiquae.⁴ Close parallels are especially frequent in the following texts: MS British Museum Harleian 2378, edited by Henslow (Henslow B);⁵ the Practica Edwardia Universitatis Oxoniensis in MS British Museum Royal 12 G iv;⁶ and MS Medical Society of London 136 edited by Dawson.⁷ The Medical Society MS and the Practica Edwardia begin with the heading: "Here bygynnes goode medicines þat goode leches haue fonden & drawen owte of bokes of galiene & esclepius & ypocras for þey were þe best leches of þe world."⁸ The Harleian MS has the same heading in the middle of the collection.⁹ In each case the

¹See the note to folio 290r/26-38.

²See the notes to folio 282r/11-17, 28-32.

³See the notes to folios 282v/11-17, and 298r/9-11.

⁴See the notes to folios 295r/12-18; 299v/23-24; 300r/3-7; 302v/7-15; 304r/14-17; 305v/9-16; 306v/39-307r/10.

⁵Medical works of the fourteenth century (London, 1899), pp. 76-122.

⁶Folios 188v and ff.

⁷A leechbook (London, 1934).

⁸MS Royal 12 G iv, folio 188v. The version in the Medical Society MS is longer: "Here begynneþe gode medycyns for al maner yvellis that euery man hath that gode lechys drawen owt off þe bokys that men clepe Archippus & Ypocras ffor thiese ware þe best lechis off the world in her tyme and þer for who so will do as thys boke wyll tech hym he may be sekyl to have help off all yvellis and woundys and oþer desesys and sekeness both with in and eke wyth owt." (A leechbook, ed. Dawson, p. 18, No. 1).

⁹Medical works, ed. Henslow, p. 105, l. 21 to p. 106, l. 2. MS Sloane 521, ibid. p. 139 also contains this heading, but as Henslow has edited only selections, omitting especially recipes which have already appeared in his book, it is impossible to tell whether or not the same recipes follow.

heading is followed by a recipe prescribing the washing of the head with a lye (or lee) of betony, vervain, and wormwood as a cure for the headache. This is the recipe with which the Thornton collection begins. There are parallels between the next five to seven recipes. The only other recipe which occurs in all four collections is one prescribing mustard seed and rue as a local application. In two collections, it is to be applied for head ache, and in the other two for ear ache.¹ One recipe which does not occur in the Thornton collection occurs shortly after the heading in the three other collections.² Five of the recipes appear shortly after the heading in at least two of the manuscripts.³ These facts suggest strongly that all four compilations go back to some original with a similar heading followed by at least some of the recipes which occur shortly thereafter. This suggestion is given some confirmation from Henslow's statement that in Volume 101 of the Class Catalogue of the British Museum there are at least eight entries with this heading.⁴ As both vernacular and Latin recipe literature have been little studied, it is not strange that no famous earlier compilation with this heading has been found. A special search for the work from which these collections have derived this material, perhaps at considerable distance, might bring to light one or perhaps several important sources, intermediate between the earlier more famous works, which have already been mentioned, and the late vernacular compilations. At present, we must limit ourselves to some general conclusions derived from a study of the Thornton parallels.

¹See the note to folio 280r/13-15.

²This recipe appears in MS Royal 12 G iv, folio 188v as follows: "A goode drynk for þe hed take betayne & veruayne & wermot & celydone & weybrode & rewe & walworte & sawge, & .v. oornes of peper & stampe hem & sette hem to gidere in water & drynk hit fastyng." See also A leechbook, ed. Dawson, p. 19 and Medical works, ed. Henslow, p. 106, ll. 6-9.

³References to parallels in the Thornton recipes and the collection edited by Dawson are given in the notes to folio 280r/3-5, 6-9, 10-13; one parallel occurs in MS Royal 12 G iv, folio 188v and A leechbook, ed. Dawson, p. 18, No. 6 and another in MS Royal 12 G iv, folio 188v and Medical works, ed. Henslow, p. 106, ll. 10-13.

⁴Medical works, p. 74. See also Dawson's discussion of the heading in which a similar heading in MS Sloane 610 is mentioned (A leechbook, pp. 8-9).

The material contained in these late vernacular collections is more stereotyped than has usually been recognized. It has sometimes, for example, been argued that the recipes represent the setting down of the details of folk procedure in a kind of spontaneous language which does not appear in ordinary literary prose. But the relationship of Thornton's text to other similar collections is too close and the wording is too often identical to admit the conclusion that the scribe was putting down from memory a miscellaneous collection of recipes which he had heard during the course of his life. The recipes which he attributed to the Rector of Oswaldkirk, Master William of Exceestre, and Sir Apilton were probably not home remedies. Sir Apilton's recipe and one of those attributed to the Rector prescribe highly complicated preparations mentioned by names which these or similar compounds had born since the early middle ages.¹ One of the Rector's recipes is in Latin and there are parallels to three of his English recipes.² While some of the recipes in the Liber may have been put down from memory, it is clear that the pattern of content and expression of the individual recipe was conventional and considered of sufficient importance to be retained as accurately as possible. Few instances of probable errors of the ear have been found, but there are many possible miscopyings.³ We know that the treatise of the pestilence probably had a written source. It is even possible that the whole Liber was a copy of a collection in another manuscript. One similar fifteenth century collection has survived in five different manuscripts.⁴ However, instances of this practice seem to be somewhat uncommon. On the whole, it seems likely that Thornton had access to several manuscripts containing recipe material of this sort, which he

¹See the notes to folios 298r/27 and 299r/14-18.

²See the notes to folios 295r/23-24; 298r/13-15; and 299r/19-20.

³Possible errors of the ear are dede tonge, folio 313v/14; rede diptonge, folio 307v/32; tonge of dragon, folio 312r/4; probable errors of the eye are flexigines, folio 281r/2-3; pitory, folio 307v/37; playlster, folio 280v/20; rois, folio 302r/31; and skafisagre 280v/25; see notes.

⁴British Museum, Sloane MSS, 405 and 3153, Royal MSS, 17 A. iii and 19, 674, and Harleian MS, 1600; Ein mitttelenglisches Medizibuch, ed. Fritz Heinrich (Halle, 1896).

gathered together in an arrangement which had been conventional for centuries.

The Language of the Liber

The language in which the Liber de diversis medicinis is written shows strongly marked dialectal features. The most striking and significant feature is the regular occurrence of a- and ai- spellings for Old English ā.¹ Occasional instances of o-spellings occur.² As these are grouped in a few recipes and as there are closely parallel recipes in which Midland and Southern forms appear throughout, it is probable that all of the o-spellings occur in passages in which the scribe was copying a non-Northern original.³ According to the Middle English Dictionary Staff's "Middle English Dialect Characteristics and Dialect Boundaries," localized texts with regular a- and ai- spellings are not found south of a line running from the mouth of the River Lune, in Lancashire, to the mouth of the Humber.⁴ On the basis of this dialect criterion the text was probably not written farther south than the northern part of the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire.⁵

The text contains no dialect features which would place it in another dialect than Northern. It contains none of the Southern or Western

¹Among the frequent occurrences of a- spellings unaccompanied by o-variants are: ake, ane, bare, clathe, halē, haly, sape, sare, taa, taken, etc. There are few ai-spellings: gayte, bayneworte, stayncroppe, etc. For references, see the Glossary.

²The o-spellings are: also, bone, bothe, fro, go(o), hote, more, no, none, whoſo, so, stone, poſe, two. For references, see the Glossary.

³See the notes of folios 287r/11-17; 292v/29-32; and 306v/19-23.

⁴Samuel Moore, Sanford Meech, and Harold Whitehall, "Middle English Dialect Characteristics and Dialect Boundaries," Essays and Studies in English and Comparative Literature (University of Michigan Publications, Language and Literature, Vol. XIII; Ann Arbor, 1935), pp. 8-9, 33-34.

⁵This treatment disregards the fact that the Thornton text was used as evidence for establishing this dialect line. It is possible so to disregard this fact because the Thornton text was added to the survey of Middle English dialects at the last moment, when line A had already been established by more than ample documentary evidence.

features for which dialect boundaries have been established. For example, there are no instances of the Southern initial v-for f-, nor of Western o for a before intervocalic or final nasals; there are no eo-, o-, oe-, u-, ue- spellings for either OE y, ȳ, or OE eo, eo.¹ On the other hand, it contains non-Southern features which the Northern dialect has in common with the Northeast-Midland and the Central East-Midland. The present indicative plural as well as the present indicative third person singular regularly ends in -s(e, -es, or -is, (-ys)).² The third person plural pronoun is þai (þay), þaire, and thaym (theym, þam, þem).³ The third person singular feminine pronoun is scho throughout.⁴ sal(l occurs frequently, although there are also instances of schal(l and scholde, schuld(e, shuld).⁵

The Liber also contains a number of features which appear frequently in Northern texts, but which have not been established as dialect criteria with definite boundaries. The plural of this is frequently thir.⁶ The preposition at is often used with the infinitive.⁷ The present plural of be is are or er.⁸ Old Northumbrian a before ld appears as a throughout.⁹

¹The consistent Northern forms are especially noticeable in contrast with the non-Northern forms in closely parallel recipes, e.g. Thornton: fire, Parallel: fure; Thornton: fox; Parallel: vox. See notes to folios 292v/29-32 and 306v/29-32.

²Indicative third person singular: No instances of endings in -eth, -th, etc. occur. Illustrative verbs: byhoues, comes, distourbes, febles, fes-tres, gyffes, etc.; latis, dredis, fedis, swellis, sowdis, etc.; gase, dose, hase, etc. For references, see the Glossary.

Indicative present plural: No instances of endings in -eth, -th, etc. occur. Illustrative verbs: bygynnes, calles, caldes, failes, makes, hides, etc.; callis, ettis, ledis, etc.; hase, opynns, folons, dose, suffers, etc. For references, see the Glossary.

³For references, see the Glossary.

⁴For references, see the Glossary.

⁵For references, see the Glossary.

⁶For references, see the Glossary.

⁷For references, see the Glossary.

⁸For references, see the Glossary.

⁹Illustrative words in -ald:- halde, scalde, walde, alde, calde. Holde occurs once. For references, see the Glossary.

OE and early ME ȝ appears frequently as u.¹ There are also frequent gh-spellings for OE ȝ, indicating that the guttural consonant probably was strongly pronounced.² In many cases in which an OE medial v has become final through the loss of following sounds, f- and ff- spellings occur.³ There are a few ai spellings of ME a,⁴ but no ei- or oi- spellings of ME ē, ō. In this text, the ME reflex of OE hw- is normally spelled wh-. However, it is once spelled qw-. While many Northern texts have qw- spellings entirely, there are, among the localized texts of which analyses were made for the Middle English Dialect Survey, Northern texts with few or no qw- spellings.⁵

Considering the strong probability that many of the recipes may have been copied from versions in various other dialects and spelling traditions, the language of the Liber appears surprisingly uniform and consistent.⁶ Altogether the dialect evidence points strongly to a localization in the southern part of the area in which the Northern dialect was spoken. This agrees with the localization of the manuscript and the scribe on the basis of non-linguistic evidence.

¹The u-spellings are: fute, gude, luke, blude, bludy, rute. The spelling touthe occurs. O-spellings also occur, as in gode, blode, rote, tothe, sothe.

²Illustrative words in -gh-: merghe, talge(taughe), wilghe(wylken), weghte, weghe, eghe, etc. Non-Northern spellings occur occasionally as in swalowe, wey, galowe, garow, welowe, etc. For references, see the Glossary.

³Illustrative words: gif, lefe, schafe, knafe, lofage, olife, hafe, safe, clefe, dryfe. For references, see the Glossary. Compare also R. Jordan, Handbuch der mittenglischen Grammatik (Heidelberg, 1925), p. 228, section 268, n. 1.

⁴See above, p. 23, n. 1.

⁵The one qw-spelling is qwete 'wheat'. Illustrative wh-spellings: while, whetstane, where, whelis, what, white, etc. One wh-spelling of OE w- occurs (whilde [sauge] 'wild') and one w-spelling of OE wh- (wilk 'which').

⁶Possibly of dialectal significance is the frequent appearance of double consonants. The double spellings occur especially after a long stressed vowel, e.g. droppe (OE dropa), whitte (OE hwīt), throtte (OE brotu), wynne (OE win), soupe (OF souper). Double spellings of this sort also appear in old Northumbrian.

The vocabulary of the Liber de diversis medicinis is quite as interesting as its dialect. The words which it contains constitute in some cases a real contribution to our knowledge of words referring to household affairs as well as of botanical and medical terms. There are a fair number of rare words and a few entirely new words. As Halliwell printed occasional recipes from this collection in his Dictionary of archaisms and provincialisms,¹ a number, though by no means a majority, of the most interesting occurrences are already recorded in the Oxford Dictionary. Among the interesting words which do not appear in the Oxford Dictionary are: brynt, sb. 'burnt matter', coyle, vb. probably 'strain', the plant names epworte and laverwort, and the names of the preparations Agrippa, Diatarasos, and Benedicta.² Among the words the appearance of which antedates the recorded occurrences are hauyrmele (NED1785), the names of the preparations Catholicon (NED1611) and Marciaton (NED1550), and many plant names, as red kne (NED1597), dentdelyon (NED1513), and celery (NED1664).³

There are a fair number of Scandinavian loan words. In many cases a word or phrase of Scandinavian origin appears where parallel recipes have a word or phrase of native origin. Among these parallel expressions are scharthe for scherd, gare boyle it for let it boyle, galte for borw swyne, and garthe cresse sede for town cresse sed.⁴ Other interesting Scandinavian loans are gopen 'a double handful', ysels 'ashes', and alme 'elm'.⁵

Even more striking is the number of French loan words. Plant names of French origin appear frequently, even in designating plants which

¹(London, 1860) s. Allerone, Ampulle, Ana, Anenst, Aymers, Bere, etc. A few articles refer to the Thornton medical text without quoting. Compare, for example, Areges and Thockmedils.

²For references and discussion, see the Glossary.

³For references and discussion, see the Glossary.

⁴See notes to folios 292v/11-14; 293v/18; 306v/31; and 312v/16.

⁵For references, see the Glossary.

have also a name of native origin, as maroꝝl for harhone, herb wauter for wodrofe, burtre for ellern, longedeboef for extonge, lange de cheyn' for hondistonge, and longe de cerf for hertis tonge.¹ Some rare French words occur as allerone, founce, artetik, refraide, remoile, and many plant names, among which are cucurd, crope de cambre, herb saunce crop, ypocone, rouge vrtice, and rouge runcebrere.²

These facts about the loan words in the text are in general agreement with the localization of the manuscript and identification of the scribe. It is not surprising to find in a text from the North Riding of Yorkshire a larger number of Scandinavian loans than are found in other texts of the same sort. Moreover, the larger number of direct French borrowings tends to corroborate the identification of the scribe as a gentleman, since a knowledge of French was still an esteemed accomplishment among the nobility and gentry.

¹For references, see the Glossary.

²For references and discussion, see the Glossary.

